

stop that. We have to be able to provide the resources for homeland defense, to be able to get the pharmaceutical stockpiles that are needed for a national emergency.

Our health care system, the VA, is one of the best in the country. It covers every region in the United States. And so there is a real need for us to provide them with the resources for the stockpile for pharmaceuticals that they need for antidotes and other things. They need not only the pharmaceuticals but they also need the training. Our personnel need the training. They need the resources to make that happen.

Every time we go code orange or whatever the code might be, there are certain levels where they need a police force to fortify. They need security personnel that go on overtime, not to mention the fact that because we have gone into war we find ourselves in a situation where a lot of our nurses and a lot of our doctors, a lot of our health professionals are not only working for the VA but are in the military. So we are finding a great deal of difficulty in filling those slots, and to the point that they are looking at contracting out some of the services. That is why those resources are needed.

In addition, in order to activate those four critically needed bioterrorist centers that would help us, we needed that \$20 million. The VA's many areas of expertise on such diverse topics as biomedical research, post-traumatic stress disorders, war-related illnesses, as well as environmental hazards, including both treatment of environmental exposures such as Agent Orange, ionizing radiation, as well as Gulf War illnesses, make it poised to make significant contributions to detect and diagnose and treat a lot of our soldiers as well as our constituency if we ever have to. But they need the resources in order to make that happen.

So I would appeal to the Members and to the Republicans to reassess the budget of the VA. Now, I know they will argue, and the average constituent out there will hear, no, we just added \$122 million. They do not mention that

the \$122 million came from existing services. They are coming from the services that are being provided for our veterans. And right now is when our veterans, the numbers and the demographics are growing. This is when we need them the most.

So I wanted to take this opportunity tonight to talk about health care, since this month is Health Care Month, and I wanted to take an opportunity to mention our veterans.

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Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me say that our prayers and thoughts are with our soldiers. We pray for their swift and quick return back to their loved ones.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BECERRA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. STUPAK (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and April 8 on account of a funeral in the district.

Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today and the balance of the week on account of personal family matters.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MEEK of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SKELTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. TANCREDO) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. RAMSTAD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. NORWOOD, for 5 minutes, April 8.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, April 8.

Mr. TANCREDO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, April 8, 9, 10, and 11.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan, for 5 minutes, today.

#### SENATE BILLS REFERRED

Bills of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 273. An act to provide for the expeditious completion of the acquisition of land owned by the State of Wyoming within the boundaries of Grand Teton National Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

S. 302. An act to revise the boundaries of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in the State of California, to restore and extend the term of the advisory commission for the recreation area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

S. 426. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain parcels of land acquired for the Blunt Reservoir and Pierre Canal features of the initial stage of the Oahe Unit, James Division, South Dakota, to the Commission of Schools and Public Lands and the department of Game, Fish, and Parks of the State of South Dakota for the purpose of mitigating lost wildlife habitat, on the condition that the current preferential lease-holders shall have an option to purchase the parcels from the Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, April 8, 2003, at 10:30 a.m., for morning hour debates.

#### EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for speaker-authorized official travel during the first quarter of 2003, pursuant to Public Law 95-384, and for miscellaneous groups in connection with official foreign travel during the calendar year 2002 are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO POLAND, LUXEMBOURG, MALTA, ITALY, AND PORTUGAL, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN DEC. 1 AND DEC. 12, 2002

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem <sup>1</sup>		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency <sup>2</sup>	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency <sup>2</sup>	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency <sup>2</sup>	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency <sup>2</sup>
Hon. J. Dennis Hastert	12/2	12/4	Poland		372.00		(3)				
Hon. Richard W. Pombo	12/2	12/4	Poland		372.00		(3)				
Hon. Rob Portman	12/2	12/4	Poland		372.00		(3)				
Hon. Frank D. Lucas	12/2	12/4	Poland		372.00		(3)				
Hon. Richard Burr	12/2	12/4	Poland		372.00		(3)				
Hon. Vito Fosella	12/2	12/4	Poland		372.00		(3)				
Hon. Grace F. Napolitano	12/2	12/4	Poland		372.00		(3)				
Scott Palmer	12/2	12/4	Poland		372.00		(3)				
Sam Lancaster	12/2	12/4	Poland		372.00		(3)				